Acute Events Management Course Report

23rd of September 2021

Saudi Commission for Health Specialties; 18 accredited CME hours

Delivered by WHO Collaborating Centre, Imperial College London
on the 24th, 31st of August, and the 7th of September 2021

Executive Summary

The Academy for Public Health for the Saudi Public Health Authority has delivered their second course in collaboration with the WHO Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Public Health Education and Training at Imperial College London. The Saudi Commission for Health Specialties accredited this Acute Events Management Course with 18 CME hours. This three-day online course was taught by world-class public health professionals and the WHOCC Team. The focus was to equip public health professionals with the tools required to manage their organisations, services, and health systems efficiently and effectively in the events of adverse circumstances. The content of the course aims to help participants become more successful leaders in a knowledge-based health system. Around 25 participants have been nominated to attend based on their qualifications and background since the course had a specific target audience. Out of the 25 participants that have signed up, 10 have completed all the necessary requirements for this course and received their certificates. Overall, the feedback for each class scored an average rating of 4.8 (1: poor; 5: excellent).

Background

The Public Health Authority has collaborated with the WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Education and Training at Imperial College London to create a new Academy for Public Health for Saudi Arabia. The Public Health Authority, previously known as the Saudi Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (SCDC), is leading the work to transform the public health workforce across the Kingdom. The public health workforce encompasses a broad background in education and training, representing the functions they take on at work across many ministries, institutions, community organizations, and the private sector. Consequently, training needs to improve public health core knowledge and skills that are variable and require a wide variety of different learning models.

The development of *The Academy for Public Health* is part of the Authority's pioneering initiative across the Arab world. The Academy aims to provide a well-defined, structured, and sustainable professional development programme in public and population health for all staff with health and well-being responsibilities achieved by delivering Public Health training courses and workshops.

This Public Health Practice Course is the second of many courses delivered by the now established Saudi Academy for Public Health in collaboration with the WHOCC at Imperial College London.

	Theme	Session 1 9:00 – 10:15 UK 11:00 - 12:15 KSA		Session 2 10:30 – 12:00 UK 12:30 – 14:00 KSA		Session 3 12:30 - 15:30 UK 14:30 - 17:30 KSA		Session 4 15:40 - 16:10 UK 17:40 - 18:10 KSA
Day 1 24 Aug	Resources management during acute events	Ice Breaker and Introduction to Acute Events (Ms Ela Augustyniak/ Professor Salman Rawaf)	Break	Early warning signs in acute events (Professor Salman Rawaf)	Lunch	Exercise session on effective management of resources in acute events (Ms Celine Tabche)	Break	Assignment Task
Day 2 31 Aug	Effective communication and resource mobilization	Acute Events Response (Dr Amgad Elkholy)		Informed decision making in these events (Dr Amgad Elkholy/ Ms Celine Tabche)		Feedback from day 1 and Exercise session on mobilizing resources (Dr Andrew Howe/ Dr Mouhab Jamalaldeen)		Assignment Task
Day 3 7 Sep	Management and stakeholder coordination	Tools and measures needed (Mr Rami Al Jafar/ Ms Noor Al-Rubaye)		Stakeholders' coordination (Ms Tina Purnat/ Ms Celine Tabche)		Reporting and Feedback from day 2 Case based exercise - Presenting your own strategy (Professor Salman Rawaf/ Dr Mouhab Jamalaldeen)		Assessment MCQs (Ms Celine Tabche) Wrap up (Professor Salman Rawaf)

Contributors:

- Professor Salman Rawaf (ICL) Director, WHO Collaborating Centre; Professor of Public Health
- Dr Amgad Elkholy (WHO) Lead Epidemiologist, Medical Officer
- Ms Tina D Purnat (ECDC) Principal Expert for eHealth and Digital Innovations
- Dr Judy Curson, Former Director of Public Health, Public health consultant
- Dr Andrew Howe, Public Health Consultant
- Ms Celine Tabche (ICL), MSc ANtr, PhD Candidate, Research Postgraduate WHO Collaborating Centre
- Mr Rami Al Jafar, MPH, PhD Candidate, Imperial College London
- Ms Ela Augustyniak (ICL), MA, Project Manager, WHO Collaborating Centre
- Ms Noor Al-Rubaye (ICL), MPH, Research Assistant WHO Collaborating Centre
- Dr Mouhab Jamalaldeen, MD MPH, Imperial College London

General Outlook

This training equipped the participants with the essential technical awareness and skill set to work with different acute events. Throughout this three-day course, the focus has been on acute events management, how to lead health organisations effectively across a range of dimensions including policy, service delivery, advocacy, resource mobilization in the event of public health acute event, and performance appraisals. Since the course had a specific target audience, around 25 participants have been nominated to attend this course based on their qualifications and background. An online blackboard platform was set up on the WHO Collaborating Centre (WHO CC) Imperial College London website. All the materials, presentations, exercises, and recordings have been uploaded and kept for the participants to use and review whenever they need with their login information.
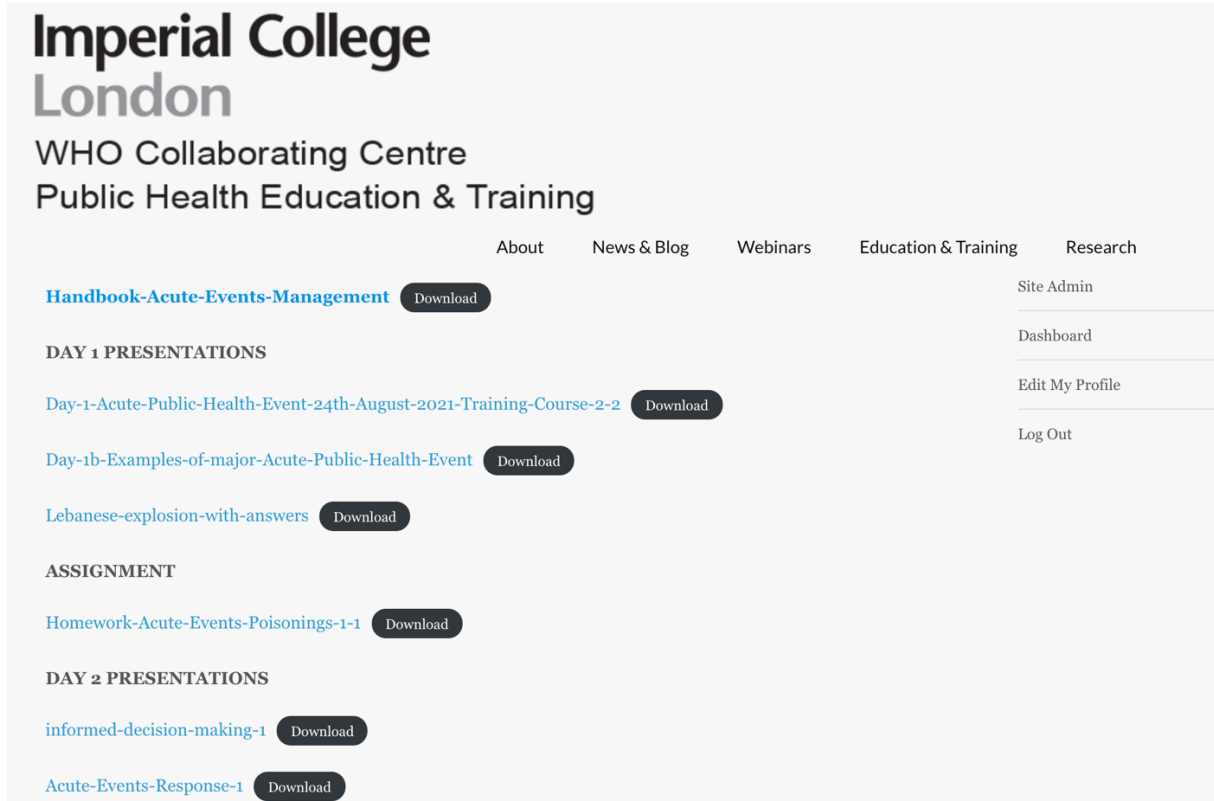
Image 1: A screenshot of the blackboard created for this course on the WHO Collaborating Centre's website.

Teaching methods involved a combination of short theoretical lectures as well as long interactive practical sessions. Practical applications used data relevant to acute event management, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Participants completed five projects either during the session or as homework. These were designed in a way to mimic the real problems faced by public health professionals. These projects aimed to

help participants engage in different activities such as reflection, application, mapping, analysis, and assessment.

The course was delivered every Tuesday for three weeks through the Zoom platform. Each training day was around seven hours in duration, where approximately two and a half hours were direct lecture with questions, one hour was allocated as break time throughout the day. The remaining time was committed to exercise and case study solving through done in individual zoom breakout rooms and then presentation feedback session by the participants in the main room. In the exercise session, instructions would be given out before the participants were separated to breakout rooms. Each breakout room had a member of the WHOCC team assisting participation and answering any potential questions.

At the end of the training, participants were evaluated through a Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) test and two assigned projects. The MCQ test score composed 60% of the final mark, while each project accounted for 20% of the final mark (2x 20%). The participants were given a week after the last day of lectures (until the 14th of September) to complete the MCQ assessment; this gave them plenty of time to visit the virtual blackboard and review materials for passing the examination. Only the participants who passed the course were asked to provide feedback on the training sessions via an online questionnaire. The evaluation of the participants will be based on their ability to define and understand the scope and the overarching aim of acute event management. Each feedback and exercise session are graded on the participant's ability to present with good content, accuracy, style, and organization, as mentioned in the course handbook.

The course certificate was only issued when all the following criteria were fulfilled:

- Attendance to all three days of the course.

- Participation during the exercise session.

- Successfully passed their feedback sessions and presentations evaluation.

- Successfully passed the MCQ assessment at the end of the course.

Public Health Competencies addressed

The course was designed to equip public health professionals with the following competencies:

1. Develop and implement strategies based on relevant evidence, legislation, emergency planning procedures, regulations, and policies.

2. Understand the local implications of the One Health* approach, its global interconnectivity and how it affects health conditions in the population.

3. Critically analyse the changing nature, key factors and resources that shape One Health to influence actions (emergency preparedness planning and response) at the local and international levels.

4. Know and apply, where needed, the International Health Regulations to coordinate and develop strategic partnerships and resources in key sectors and disciplines for health security purposes.

5. Contribute to or lead communities based on health needs assessments, ensuring that assessments consider biological, social, economic, cultural, political, and physical determinants of health and broader determinants of health such as deprivation.

* One Health: One Health is an approach that recognizes that the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment. One Health is not new, but it has become more important in recent years and in particular during Covid-19 Pandemic. This is because many factors have changed interactions between people, animals, plants, and our environment.

Learning Outcomes

Participants are now able to:

1. Demonstrate a universal understanding of health leadership during epidemic and pandemic setting.
2. Recognise best practice of resources management in the event of an acute outbreak.
3. Determine an ability to effectively tackle real problems from situational interpretation to high-level decision-making with a clear sense of accountability and responsibility during an acute event setting.
4. Effectively lead during acute events including pandemics whilst maintaining regular services.
5. Effectively manoeuvre political responses during an acute event and pandemic settings.
6. Meet the competencies required for acute level management.

Structure

The course was divided into the following modules:

1. Activation of emergency plans
2. Interventions steps
3. Minimising the impact of acute events
4. Measures of success

Detailed sessions' outlines can be found in the handbook provided previously.

Image 2: Professor Salman Rawaf presenting his first lecture for this course on Early Warning Signs in Acute Events.

Exercises

Day 1: Effective management of resources in the Lebanese Port Explosion

Objectives:

- Main priorities in this situation from a public health perspective
- Main objectives assigned in the situation in terms of:

    o   Leadership and coordination

- o Health services and delivery

- o COVID-19 response

- o Mental health and psychosocial

- o Environmental
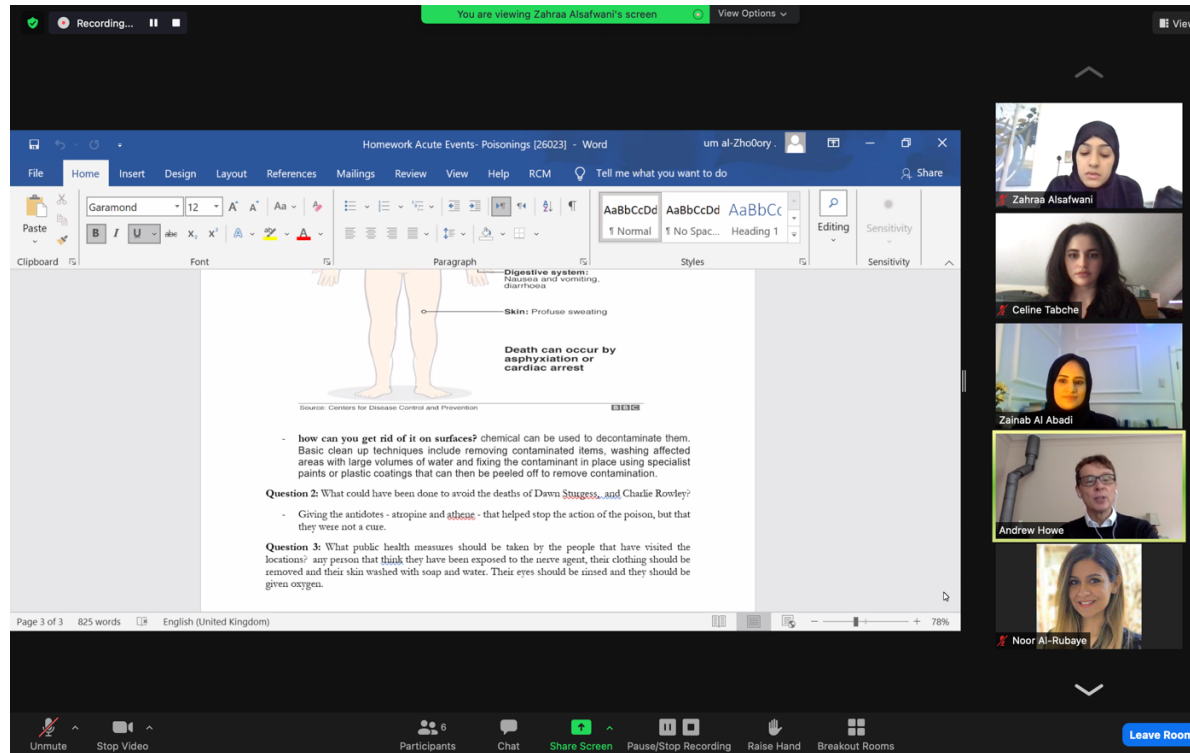
Image 3: Dr Andrew Howe and Ms Celine Tabche going through the homework assignment on the Salisbury Poisoning with the participants.

Assignment to take home:

The exercise was about the Salisbury poisoning that happened in 2018. Participants were asked to prepare answers to the questions and discuss them with each other in the next session. Questions inquired about what plan should have been taken by a public health professional to avoid deaths and what measures should have been advised to the public. During the feedback session, Day 2, the participants were given time before their presentations to prepare and practice as a group.

Day 2: A Case Study about the Mecca Crane Collapse

Participants were asked to identify and describe acute event management factors that could improve public health strategies and minimize the occurrence of acute events. These included key elements like crowd management, stakeholder coordination, resource allocation, implementation challenges, and surveillance.
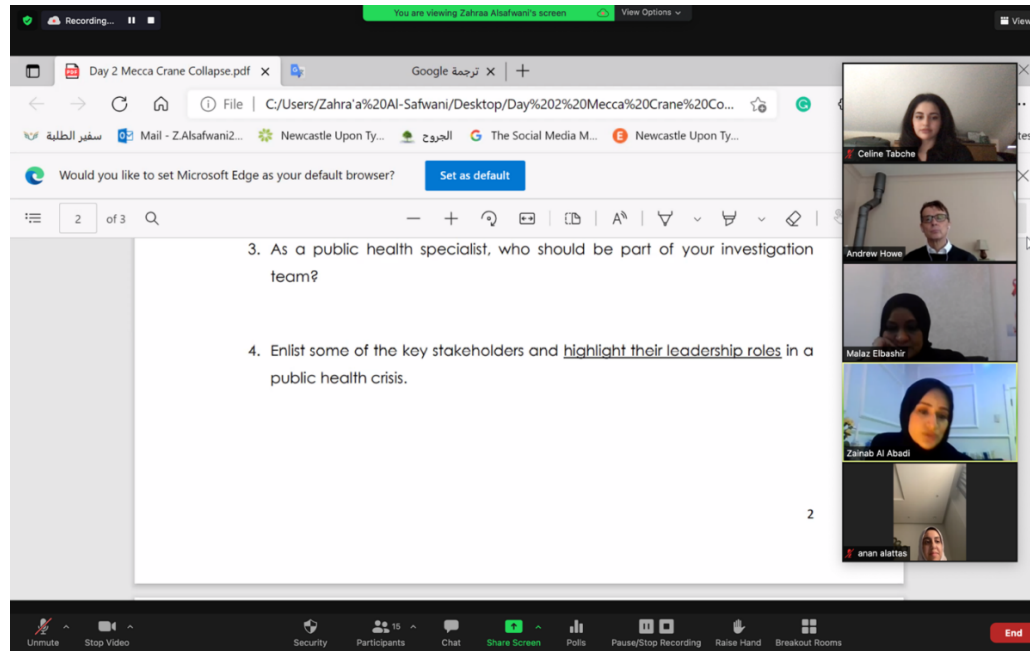
Image 3: Participants working together on answering the case study's questions in the breakout room.

Assignment to take home:

A case study about the Mina Stampede in Hajj 2015. Questions included what strategies should have been taken to reduce the risk of crowd-related mortalities and injuries, what should be included in the emergency and preparedness plan for acute events, and how one would approach key stakeholders. During the feedback session, Day 3, the participants were given time before their presentations to prepare and practice as a group.

Day 3: A Case Study on a strategic plan to tackle the Haiti Earthquake

Participants were asked to oversee a public health authority or department responsible for the earthquake. Questions included the best ways to recruit surveillance, early warning, and information management systems to manage the disaster effectively, and to conduct a SWOT situational analysis.

Attendance and Assessment

As mentioned previously, participants will only receive the certificate of completion upon attending all three days of the course and a passing grade for the assessments.

Out of the 25 participants that have signed up, 10 have completed all the necessary requirements for this course and will receive their report cards and certificates through emails. An Excel spreadsheet (Appendix 1) has been drafted since the beginning of the course that tracks their attendance, participation grades, feedback, and assessments. Their total grade has been calculated according to the marking scheme mentioned in the handbook. The breakdown of their results has been included in their report card to ensure maximum grade transparency (Appendix 2). Exceptions were made for the participants that had a valid reason not to attend one day of the course. They were given the opportunity to go back and watch the recorded sessions on the virtual blackboard and solve the homework assignment and then granted access to sit the MCQ assessment.
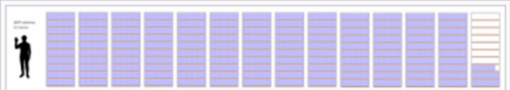
Image 4: Ms Tina Purnat presenting her lecture about infodemics and stakeholder coordination.

Feedback

A feedback survey was sent to the participants after they finished all the requirements to pass this training course. This survey included questions about how they found each lecture and if they had any suggestions for improving the delivery of this course. Overall, the average rating of each class was 4.8 (1: poor; 5: excellent). The general reviews found the course very informative, organised, and practical. And many wanted more days, even though each day ran for more than 6 hours. Several reached out privately and showed appreciation with kind words on the successful delivery of the second course and asked if there are other courses that will be delivered by the Saudi Academy for Public Health in collaboration with the team at the WHO Collaborating Centre, Imperial College London.

Image 6: Screenshot from the feedback survey that was filled by the participants – this question was about their feedback on the assignments.

Appendix 1

The table below is a small sample extracted from the excel spreadsheet created for the participants of this course. Their names and details were removed for confidentiality. Please note: This table shows how Attendee A, that did not participate in the sessions even though they did attend, did not pass the MCQ assessment.

Name	Day 1 Attendance	Day 2 Attendance	Day 2 (20%)	Day 2 Grades Breakdown	Day 3 Attendance	Day 3 (20%)	Day 3 Grades Breakdown	MCQ (60%)	Total
X			54	Content (50%): 55 Accuracy (20%): 50 Style (15%): 60 Organisation (15%): 50		50	Content (50%): 50 Accuracy (20%): 50 Style (15%): 50 Organisation (15%): 50	36/45 - 80%	68.8 - MERIT

Y			69.15	Content (50%): 65 Accuracy (20%): 85 Style (15%): 68 Organisation (15%): 63		76.7	Content (50%): 76 Accuracy (20%): 63 Style (15%): 85 Organisation (15%): 89	38/45 - 84%	79.57 - DISTINCTION
Z			78.1	Content (50%): 85 Accuracy (20%): 85 Style (15%): 64 Organisation (15%): 60		82.5	Content (50%): 85 Accuracy (20%): 80 Style (15%): 80 Organisation (15%): 80	39/45 - 86%	83.72 - OUTSTANDING DISTINCTION
A			Did not participate	Content (50%): Accuracy (20%): Style (15%): Organisation (15%):		Did not participate	Content (50%): Accuracy (20%): Style (15%): Organisation (15%):	19/45 - 42%	FAIL
B			61.15	Content (50%): 64 Accuracy (20%): 58 Style (15%): 63 Organisation (15%): 54		70.7	Content (50%): 70 Accuracy (20%): 75 Style (15%): 68 Organisation (15%): 70	36/45 - 80%	74.37 - DISTINCTION

Appendix 2

The template for the report card created for this course.

Imperial College London
WHO Collaborating Centre
Public Health Education and Training

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Public Health Academy هيئـة الصحة العامـة
PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY

Acute Events Management Course
Transcript

Dear ████████████████

Congratulations on completing this three-day interactive online training course! Please find your grade breakdown below!

Attendance		100 %
Day 2 Feedback and Participation (20%)	Content	60 %
	Accuracy	55 %
	Style	55 %
	Organisation	50 %
Day 3 Feedback and Participation (20%)	Content	64 %
	Accuracy	58 %
	Style	63 %
	Organisation	54 %
MCQ Assessment (60%)		77 %
Total		69.78 % - Merit

Thank you for your dedication!